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AN
E P I S T L E
FROM A
Y O U N G L A D Y
TO AN
E N S I G N I N T H E G U A R D S,
UPON HIS BEING ORDERED TO
A M E R I C A.

facies, quam dicere vere
Virgineam in puero, puerilem in Virgine posses.

METAM.

L O N D O N :

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F P I S T I

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Y O U N G M A N

E N G I N E E R I N G

U N I O N

A M T B C

PL



THE Author of the following pages thinks some apology necessary to the Gentlemen, to whose corps the *Object* of these lines belongs. He begs leave to assure them, that he has every respect for their situation, and services ; and of this he considers himself as giving the most judicious proof, in holding forth to public contempt a Character that degrades the Officer, and reproaches the Man. He wou'd wish to wipe away every stain from the profession ; and whenever he sees it's reputation in danger of being sullied, interpose, to rescue it from disgrace. — With regard to the mode he has taken, he will only say, he considers it, as the best adapted to the purpose he wishes to promote. — To address this *insignificant personage* in the strong language of satire, would be — in his opinion — to thunder in the ear of a fly.

THE number of the following pages which have been
to the Government, in which cases the Office of the
He has been to assist them, that he has been asked for his services,
and services; and of this he considers himself as giving the most
and proud, in doing so, to public contempt, a character that is
the Office, and especially the Agent. He would wish to wipe away
every stain from the profession, and whenever he has his reputation in
danger of being killed, he would, to rescue it from danger. — With
regard to the mode he has taken, he will only say, he considers it as the
best adapted to the purpose he wishes to promote. — I submit this to
your judgment in the language of truth, would be — in his
opinion — to stand in the car of a ship.

E P I S T L E

FROM A

Y O U N G L A D Y

TO AN

ENSIGN IN THE GUARDS.

A L A S! what dreadful sounds awake my fear,

What horrid tidings to a Lover's ear!

And must thou leave me! Can thy tender heart

Forget it's idol, from it's passion part!

Nurs'd in the downy lap of peaceful ease,

Can War delight, can savage slaughter please?

B

BUT

But ah ! methinks I hear these accents fall,
 " Leave thee I must" my King and Country call.
 Thy King and Country ! what are these to thee !
 Am I not thine, art thou not all to me !
 But cease oh frantic Maid ! unpitying fate,
 Has seal'd thy doom, and fix'd thy woful state !

To grief abandon'd, to distress betray'd,
 By passion lost, oh ! summon reason's aid ;
 Her pow'rful counsels shall thy rage controul,
 Calm thy fierce transports, and subdue thy soul ;
 Compose thy anguish, and allay thy shame,
 And snatch thee, helpless, from a guilty flame.

Ah ! vain the toil, will vaunting reason find,
 He reigns the lawless tyrant of my mind :
 Within my beating breast, enthron'd secure,
 Spite of her efforts, shall his reign endure !

For,

For, how forget that memorable night,
 When first thy beauties charm'd my wond'ring sight.
 Thy slender form inclin'd with graceful ease,
 And seem'd to wave with every passing breeze ;
 Thine eyes (when from thyself thine eyes cou'd stray)
 Beam'd with the mildness of a vernal day :
 Soft was the polish of thy snowy skin,
 No bristly beard defac'd thy velvet chin :
 No rude athletic leg, no sinewy arm !—
 In thee, the Woman, did, a Woman charm.
 Thy scarlet frock, of purest Tyrian dye,
 In beauteous folds, did negligently fly ;
 Thy sword, whose beams with orient lustre vied,
 In peaceful mood, hung loosely at thy side,
 While as if studious to adorn its place,
 The sword-knot glitter'd with peculiar grace.
 Oh ! had but Venus view'd thee thus adorn'd,
 She had not long her dear Adonis mourn'd.

THE slave of fancy, since that fatal night,
 Swords, epaulettes, cockades, confuse my fight.
 A little arsenal my toilet seems,
 Where the steel glitters with refulgent beams.
 O'erspread with various arms of fatal kind,
 Here, every warlike instrument I find.
 My Cap, the more commanding form assumes,
 Of a bright helmet, grac'd with nodding plumes.
 Here rows of pins like bayonets are seen,
 There troops engage—upon an Indian screen.
 In peaceful bodkins direful pikes I wield,
 My stays a cuirass, and my fan a shield;
 My comb whose speckled shell, was wont to please,
 Now metamorphos'd—a Cheval de frize.

To sleep, in vain I close my weary eyes,
 Alas! in sleep the same deceits arise!

With

With martial ardour now my bosom glows,
 And pants for vengeance on my country's foes.
 Anon, my fancy courts an humbler state,
 And weeps the dictates of too rigid fate.
 Thy hapless spouse, to dire misfortune born,
 I see thee from my dear embraces torn.
 Thy steps I follow—now, methinks, I hear
 Some distant groan ! loud shouts awake my fear !
 Headlong you rush to snatch the laurel'd crown,
 And with resistless arm mow legions down.
 Return'd, once more, I clasp thee in my arms,
 I gaze with wonder o'er thy warlike charms ;
 And from thy recent wounds, with lenient care,
 Wash the stiff gore, and healing drugs prepare.
 Oh ! never may such real scenes subsist,
 No woeful tablature like this exist !

Unlike those damsels, who in days of yore,
 For fighting swains had many toils in store;
 Who never would embrace a tender knight,
 'Till he had figur'd in some butch'ring fight;
 Not by such methods wou'd I wish to prove
 The fav'rite object of my constant love,
 Expose the *Lover* thus to try the *Man*!
 —No—let me rather clasp him while I can.

BUT now, alas! to scenes of real woe
 I wake, ah whither! whither must he go!
 Torn from these clasping arms, this aching sight,
 He bears the standard to the distant fight.
 Was it for this, I fann'd the kindling flame,
 Was it for this a soldier he became?
 Far other scenes employ'd his youthful mind,
 To glory senseless, to ambition blind.

Off'

Oft' had he heard, the tender am'rous Maid
 Ogled the sword, and leer'd at the cockade ;
 That youthful Warriors were the Virgin's care,
 And that the brave alone deserv'd the fair.
 Say, did he mean to mount Bellona's car,
 Who thought St. James's was the seat of war ?
 Who never wish'd to march—but on the Mall,
 Or to engage—but at the evening ball.
 Where pocket-hoops the only bastions form,
 Where without danger breast-works he might storm :
 Where neither thunder roars, nor lightening flies,
 No battery plays—but conquering beauty's eyes :
 No camp—but what at Drury-lane invites,
 No post of danger—but on Opera nights !
 The wounded soldier, to his duty true,
 Bleeds—but 'tis only in the billet-doux,

And

And tho' each arrow rankle in the heart,
 No Theban dies when we extract the dart.

AND must he go ! borne o'er the distant sea,
 Shall the wide ocean part my love and me ?
 His, all the horrors of a soldier's state ;
 What dreadful ills that tender frame await !
 Alas ! the clay-cold sod, his only bed,
 Who on my lap was wont to rest his head.
 Expos'd to midnight damps, to morning dew,
 Embrown'd by noon-tide heat his rosy hue !
 Methinks, I see him now—how chang'd his air !
 Where is Chapeau to smoothe his ruffled hair !
 What new cosmetic shall that bloom restore,
 Or cleanse those lilly hands defil'd with gore !
 Oh ! who shall guard him, helpless to sustain
 The fense acute of agonizing pain.

Once

Once on a time, warm'd with unusual heat ;
 As dauntless rising from the social treat,
 He sallied forth, some chosen friends around,
 Whose heated brows with verdant vines were bound ;
 Fir'd with the grape, he challeng'd to the fight,
 A noisy guardian of the silent night.
 In him, the bloom of youth had ceas'd to charm,
 But ripening age had nerv'd his manly arm.
 His downcast eye proclaim'd his fullen pride,
 His face was cloudy, like the night he cried ;
 The lonely Wanderer shunn'd his dreaded stand,
 Who seiz'd on beauty with too rude a hand :
 And oft had Riot's Sons with mirth elate,
 His morning triumph grac'd in captive state.
 Awhile the jeering taunt incens'd each foe,
 Awhile suspended was the dreadful blow :
 But now, the sturdy champion sees display'd,
 Full in his sight, his rival's glitt'ring blade !

Straight, at his head, he aims a deadly wound,
 (His stricken head returns a hollow sound !)
 Stunn'd with the blow, dim mists obscure his eyes,
 And bleeding, lifeless, on the ground he lies !
 To guard the body of their fallen friend,
 The scatter'd troop with desperate strength contend ;
 And long the battle rag'd with doubtful sway,
 'Till the loud rattle publish'd an affray ;
 Oppress'd by numbers, then, compell'd to yield,
 They left with hasty steps, th' embattled field.
 Thus when Patroclus fell by Hector's hand,
 Vain were the efforts of the Grecian band :
 His bleeding corps the Trojans bore away,
 And great Achilles' arms became the conqueror's prey.

BUT ah ! unhappy me ! the hour draws nigh,
 The signals wave, the gaudy pendants fly.

The

The seaman watches the propitious gale,
 The parting bark unfurls the swelling fail.
 Oh ! e'er too late these prayers shall be prefer'd,
 Oh ! while this feeble voice can still be heard !
 My F—— stay ! renounce the dangerous fight,
 Nor quit these charms, nor fly this favouring fight.
 Behind my chair, still take thy destin'd stand,
 Play with my fan, and press my pressing hand.
 Adjust my head-dress, watch my rolling eye,
 Gaze, while my rising bosom heaves the sigh :
 Still fluttering round me, catch the wanton leer,
 Still whisper pleasing flatteries in my ear ;
 Praise my new slippers, and admire my gown,
 And tell me, all the scandal of the town,
 Say, shall my charmer bow to Indian maids,
 Rude as their rocks, wild as their woody glades ;

Or,

Or, will those liberal manners e'er succeed,
 With a starch prude of the New England breed ?
 Will prim devotion a free-thinker bear,
 Will oaths polite, obtain the pious fair ;
 Whose only passion is a spiritual love,
 Whose only grace, imparted from above ?
 Shall he to rebels envied bliss impart,
 And, flush'd with conquest, mourn his conquer'd heart.
 Will soft remembrance fan the dying flame,
 And kindle passion with Louisa's name :
 Or will past scenes but animate desire,
 And to new loves direct the guilty fire ?
 Distressing thought !—thou shalt not fly these charms,
 Blooms not eternal spring within these arms !
 Come, and with pleasing vows, my grief assuage :—
 Now doubts distract, now jealous torments rage,

But,

But, at thy voice, my bosom hush'd to peace,
 Each doubt shall perish, and each torment cease.
 Come, with thy presence, cheer the gloomy day,
 Shoot thro' the low'ring clouds a cheering ray,
 Bright scenes of bliss, of lasting pleasure form,
 And bid the sun-shine to disperse the storm !

VAIN wish ! vain hope ! he hears not what I say ;
 Far o'er the watery waste he bends his way.
 Farewell !—but see, the western sun declines,
 And with diminish'd light, but feebly shines.
 Night comes, and with her, jocund, brings along,
 The sportive dance, and animating song.
 Now to the haunts of pleasure I repair :—
 May Venus watch thee with a mother's care !

F I N I S.

But, at thy voice, my bosom bled to peace,
 Each doubt shall perish, and each torment cease.
 Come, with thy presence, cheer the gloomy day,
 Shout thro' the howling clouds a cheering ray,
 Bright scenes of bliss, of lasting pleasure form,
 And bid the sun shine to dispel the storm!
 Vain wish! vain hope! he hears not what I say;
 Far o'er the waters, he sends his way.
 Farewell! — but see the western sun declines,
 And with dimmish'd light, but feeble shines.
 Night comes, and with her sound, brings along
 The sportive dance, and animating song.
 Now to the haunts of pleasure I repair —
 May Venus watch thee with a mother's care!